

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.9
H-755R

RECEIVED
★ MAR 24 1936 ★
U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

NOTES FROM CORNELL FARM AND HOME WEEK

A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics and Mr. Kenneth Gapen, Press Service, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Thursday, March 5, 1936.

--ooOoo--

MR. GAPEN: Miss Van Deman, we're glad to have you back. And I know I'm speaking for the women in this audience when I say we've missed you very much these last weeks.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you, Mr. Gapen, for those kind words.

MR. GAPEN: We were glad to give you leave to go up to Cornell to Farm and Home Week, but we didn't commission you to go away and have the grippe. Miss Van Deman, could it be that you forgot your daily quota of vitamins? Haven't I heard you talk about the protective virtues of vitamins?

MISS VAN DEMAN: A ha! I might have known you'd try to turn those vitamin tables on me! No, sir, I still hold to what I said, even if I did backslide myself. And I'm sure that the quarts and quarts of orange juice and tomato juice I consumed while I was in bed helped me to shake off the grippe "bugs." Anyway, I'm still strong on the vitamin theory though I may be a little weak on the practice.

Now to go back to Farm and Home Week at Cornell. A visit up there is always an inspiration to me. I'm impressed anew every time with what the women of New York have achieved for themselves and for their daughters and their daughters daughters. They've succeeded in establishing the home economics work in a State college ranking in dignity with all the other colleges of the university. And the home economics building is as fine as any on the campus. No wonder that each year more and more women and men also go to the college of home economics during Farm and Home Week to hear the lectures, watch the demonstrations, and take in the exhibits.

MR. GAPEN: Won't you tell us a little bit about some of those exhibits?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, I'm glad to. The one on home and school lighting I think impressed me most. And others felt the same way. Over 6,000 persons visited that one exhibit. It showed the importance of the amount of light, the shading of lights, and the placing of lights, to prevent eyestrain. I could hardly believe that there was the same amount of electric current being used in two living rooms shown side by side. One room was so dark and gloomy that it fairly made your eyes ache to think of trying to sew or read in that room. The lamps were low and had heavy dark shades that threw circles of light straight down, like spotlights on the stage. The wallpaper was so dark it fairly soaked up light. And the tables and chairs were standing about with no relation to the light that would fall

(over)

over the right shoulder, or the left shoulder, or anywhere near a person wanting to do close work.

MR. GAPEN: A perfect example of how not to arrange a livingroom. A regular gloom parlor, I take it.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Exactly. And by contrast the room next to it was like a sun parlor. There wasn't a dark corner in it. For one thing, the wallpaper was of a soft cream tone that reflected light. The lamps were of the type recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society. They were rather high and were equipped with diffusing globes that prevent glare from the electric bulbs. And as for the furniture, you could see that the placing of every piece had been very carefully studied in relation to the convenience and comfort of the people who would use the room. The tables, and chairs, and desk, and so forth were in attractive groups, and the lamps were placed so that the light would fall over the left shoulder of anyone reading the paper or sewing or writing. All the lamp shades were very light, practically white. There was an attractive young student on hand, one of the home economics girls to demonstrate the light-meter, a little instrument that measures the amount of light at a given spot in the room, just as a thermometer records the temperature. She talked very glibly about footcandles--

MR. GAPEN: Foot-candles? What are they?

MISS VAN DEMAN: Well, I'm glad you don't know about foot-candles either, Mr. Gapen. You make me feel better. For I never heard of foot-candles until this young lady at Cornell popped them on me. A foot-candle, it seems, is the unit of measure for light - the amount of light shed by one candle on an object one foot away.

MR. GAPEN: And before long I suppose we'll all be finding out just how many foot-candles we need at the reading table in the evening to prevent eyestrain.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, probably. And for better lighting in schoolrooms, there were a lot of practical suggestions. Here's just one very small point I picked up. Blackboards across the end of a room absorb a lot of light. I remember how I used to dread to sit on the side of the room next to the blackboard. But now the lighting experts suggest light-colored curtains or window shades to pull over the blackboards when not in use. They are a great help, they say, in reflecting light.

MR. GAPEN: Sounds like a good idea. All this education on better lighting in the home and the schoolroom of course ties right in with the program of the Rural Electrification Administration.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, if there's going to be more light, let it be the best light. That was what the people who planned this exhibit had in mind. They are working in close connection with the Rural Electrification program in New York State.

Then another exhibit that interested me greatly was of various kinds of labor-saving equipment. Each piece had a placard alongside calling attention to some of the points a woman should ask before she buys. For example,

beside a rather small electric mixer was this sign: "Will this appliance do what I want it to do? Will it mix batters or only liquids? Is this capacity right for my purpose? In other words, this was an exhibit to help the consumer buy intelligently, not to tempt her to load her kitchen shelves with tricky-looking gadgets that later prove white elephants.

Here's another that made me stop and think.

"Lamp cords and sockets waste electricity and deteriorate rapidly when used with heat appliances. In other words, when the cord on the toaster or the electric iron gives out, don't resort to a makeshift. Go and get a new cord suited to that piece of equipment. You'll save current and maybe prevent a serious accident.

#####

Faint, illegible text in the upper middle section of the page.

Faint, illegible text in the middle section of the page.